Effective Teamwork

1. Realize you are joining an established team and get the "lay of the land."
   - Observe behaviors. Identify external (thinking out loud) vs. internal (thinking things through before speaking) processors. Who likes to wear which of the six hats? Where is each person on the whole brain map?
   - If there is no explicit team agreement, build one from observation. Are there formal (or informal) roles? Are the mission and performance goals clear? How is accountability established? What behaviors are (un)acceptable? Are specific methods of operation being employed?
   - If a key portion of your "observed team agreement" is missing or unclear to you, ask the leader.

2. Focus first and foremost on your individual behaviors
   - Most importantly, be sure you understand and meet your commitments: WHAT specifically YOU need to do by WHEN.
   - Be sure to CHECK-IN with the leader and/or dependent team members if one of your commitments is at risk.
   - Participate actively but effectively in discussions. Don’t interrupt: listen, try to understand and then respond. Make observations brief allowing for questions. Establish safety: draw silent people out, refrain from quick judgements and provide feedback constructively.
   - As a newer team member, you don’t necessarily have all the context, so start by assuming the best of your teammates!
   - Adopt an outward mindset. Care about others’ needs/challenges and ask what you can do to help make things easier for the team.
   - Take the initiative to develop a deeper understanding of the issue, explore the implications of your findings, and identify potential next steps.

3. Look for simple opportunities to improve team methods of operation
   - Offer to perform a role not being covered—likely not the leader but perhaps timekeeper or scribe/recorder.
   - If a discussion is going off on a tangential issue suggest creating a "parking lot."
   - If assignments are unclear suggest identifying specific deliverables, owners and dates. (Who does what by when, check-in.)
   - If there’s no plus/delta debrief, do one in your own head. Make some positive comments on things that went well. Make suggestions about what YOU might do better next time. Try to stimulate a team-wide debrief.
   - Refer to the Effective Teamwork piece on the UPOP website for ideas on how to safely make suggestions.
   - Suggest changes that seem sensitive or uncomfortable in private to the leader rather than the whole group.

Investigating mental diversity with the whole brain model

According to the HBDI model of the brain, there are 4 preference groups: Analytical, Structured, Interpersonal, and Conceptual. These preferences are expressed in the way an individual processes information, communicates, and has expectations of others. People have very different profiles but everyone has all of them, just stronger in one or more of the preferences. Under stress the pattern may shift towards one of the preferences.

Negotiation Training

Effective negotiation requires us to engage in joint fact-finding to fully understand our counter-parties’ interests while communicating our own. Fostering this shared understanding is what allows stakeholders to move past the cycle of demands-counter-demands we frequently see in escalating conflicts. This approach to negotiation as a problem-solving effort is fundamentally different from the zero-sum mindset that assumes one party must lose for the other to gain. Instead, by investing time and effort in collaboratively devising mutually beneficial trades across our differences, we create lasting value for the diverse different communities we represent, rendering our agreements more flexible, resilient, and sustainable.

Presenting Professionally

Many people are afraid of speaking to a group. It’s a skill you can build, just the way you build your engineering skills. And remember, your audience wants to like you. Choose someone and make eye contact. Then move on to someone else. Keep your hands and arms relaxed. No fig leaves or hands in pockets. Practice speaking loudly and clearly. Project and enunciate. Vary your pitch and the rate at which you speak. Sound enthusiastic.

Be brief. Be brilliant. Be gone.

Remember P.R.E.P. Make your Point. Provide your Reason. Offer an Example. Restate your original Point.

Check out the UPOP website for more details: upop.mit.edu/team-training-takeaways
Team Creativity Methods

**Process**
- Deciding how the work will be done
- Observing and controlling team activity

**Facts**
- Objective information to define the:
  - context
  - stakeholders
  - extent of the problem
  - time and resources available
  - tradeoffs

**Creative**
- Brainstorming
- Random word association

**Affinity Diagrams**

**Multi-voting**

**Emotions**
- Hunches
- Gut feelings

**Critical**
- Flaws
- Risks
- Ways to mitigate or avoid these issues

**Constructive**
- Stating the benefits of an option
- Building on them

**Accountability Matrix**